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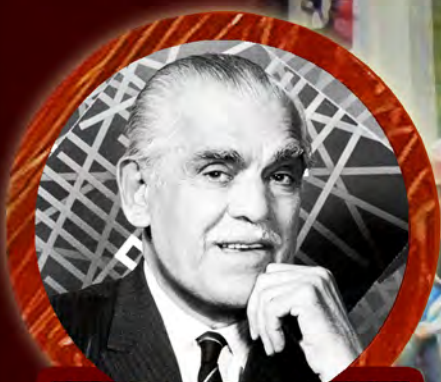
**BASEMENT
SUBLET
ISSUE
#6**

**MARCH
2017**

THE BASEMENT SUBLET OF HORROR MAGAZINE



**AN HISTORICAL LISTING
OF KANSAS/MISSOURI
HORROR HOSTS**



**PART 3 OF RICHARD
CHAMBERLAIN'S
GUIDE TO THE FILMS
OF BORIS KARLOFF**

ALSO:

**"MY MOTHER TALKED BORIS KARLOFF OUT OF HIS SHOES,
THE SHOCKING TRUE STORY!" BY BEN URISH**

**An Interview with
Film Director & Educator
LANCE HAYES**

Lance Hayes provided these images from his collection, to supplement our interview with him, see page 5



Top: The premiere of the movie **King Kung Fu**, held at the Wichita movie theater **The Crest**.

Bottom: Prop newspaper from the movie **King Kung Fu**, custom printed by the Wichita newspaper the **Eagle/Beacon** for the production, used for "zoom to spinning" newspaper shot.

EXTRA! The Wichita Eagle and Beacon EXTRA!

64 Pages

Wichita, Kansas 67201 1975

Price 15 cents

Ape Escape Has Wichita Agape!



Monster Master of the Martial Arts Marauds

WICHITA — Today, during the unveiling of **King Kung Fu**, the celebrated Chinese gorilla, a strange turn of events took place. When the curtain fell, it was not **King Kung Fu** in the cage, but Herman, a free lance photographer inside, and **King Kung Fu** outside.

The entire crowd, there to witness the unveiling, fled in panic. Moments later, the police tactical squad arrived, headed by Capt. J. W. Duke, to subdue and recapture the loose gorilla. Much to the dismay of the entire squad, they discovered that the gorilla was a master of the martial arts, as he "kung fu'd" each and every officer, and was about to dispatch Capt. Duke, when Rae Fey, an aspiring local model on hand to help with the unveiling, managed to soothe the savage beast and lead him back into captivity.

Capt. Duke's comment was, "no gorilla's goin' to make a monkey outa us, but I gotta admit, I never saw nothin' like it in my life." Witnesses said the gorilla

used kicks, jumps, punches, chops, trickery and deceit to overcome the Tactical Squad, a highly trained group designed to be used in unusual circumstances such as this.

Hoping that the gorilla is now safely back in his cage, and will not be allowed to use his prowess on the unsuspecting public, public officials have stated that **King Kung Fu** will now be on exhibit at the Sedgwick

County Zoo through next Saturday, when he will then leave for other points east, on his way to New York. (More stories and pictures on page 7A).

Local Kung Fu Instructor Stunned

Albert Dodge, **Kung Fu** instructor in Wichita, was stunned when he heard the story of **King Kung Fu**, the Chinese gorilla, and his ability to use the martial arts to defend himself against the police, and escape capture.

When asked for his comments, Dodge said: "I am stunned." Queries are pouring in from around the world, asking "how could a gorilla learn the finesse of such a grueling thing such as **Kung Fu**?" We too, asked these questions and got absolutely no answers.

However, one fact remains, and that is, **King Kung Fu** does know **Kung Fu**, and we for one hope that he does not get another chance to demonstrate it against our residents or our fine police department. (More comments and theories on Page 8A)

Populace Protected

Zane Humfleet, popular zoo keeper, stated today that all precautions are being taken to protect the populace from being pummeled by the prestigious gorilla.

New locks have been installed on the trap doors, and heavier security has been secured.

(More on protection on Page 9A)

THE BASEMENT SUBLET OF HORROR

MAGAZINE

MARCH 2017, ISSUE #6

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STAFF:

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COVER - JOEL SANDERSON [BASED ON PHOTOS FROM LANCE HAYES]

SPECIAL THANKS TO - LANCE HAYES, BRADLEY BEARD, BEN URISH, & DAVE TOPLIKAR

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NEW BLU-RAY EDITION OF THE FILM CARNIVAL OF SOULS

Welcome to issue #6 of
The Basement Sublet of Horror magazine.

We're very excited to be able to share with our new interview with Kansas film director Lance Hayes. We originally met him in the early 1980s at Wichita State University. It was great to catch up and document stories from Lance's career in film. We also want to thank Bradley Beard, who was the featured interview in Basement Sublet of Horror (BSOH) issue #4, for helping us compile our list of the horror hosts of Kansas and Missouri. It's a project that we've been wanting to complete for a number of years.

During the production of this issue of Basement Sublet of Horror magazine, we were contacted by the Criterion Collection about contributing footage for an updated Blue-Ray edition release of "Carnival of Souls."

Demolition Kitchen Video (DKV), a partner project of BSOH, has been posting rare footage from Carnival of Souls' director Herk Harvey. In the 1990s, Demolition Kitchen Video was asked to inventory, organize, and transfer as much footage from Harvey's 16mm film collection as possible. Demolition Kitchen Video completed the task with the condition that any copies of interest could be used in our collection. One of the finds in the Herk Harvey films was an unfinished and previously unreleased feature film called "The Reluctant Witch," a film that we talked about in BSOH issue #5.



Herk Harvey director of Carnival of Souls



By coincidence, while in conversation with Lance Hayes, he brought up that he had attended the original premiere of Carnival of Souls held in Lawrence, Kansas in 1962 at the Granada theater. Lance had saved his original ticket along with newspaper ads and a flyer announcing the show. Lance was nice enough to share scans of these items with us and talked a little about his meeting Herk Harvey in the 1970s while a graduate student at The University of Kansas.

The Criterion Collection asked DKV to share all footage that we'd saved from the Herk Harvey collection and included Lance Hayes' material from the films premiere. The release of the new Criterion Collection Blue-Ray edition of Carnival of Souls is set for July of this year (2016). We are anxiously awaiting the release and hope to see some of our contributions used in the project.

(continued on page 41 of this issue)



Lance Hayes in his office at Bulter County Community College.

BSOH: You graduated from The University of Kansas, how did your career in radio and film begin?

LH: My filmmaking began when I was 14 years old and received a used Bell & Howell movie camera for Christmas. I also was given one 50-foot roll of black and white film. I began making action/adventure, horror, and comedy films then and did so for my entire high school career and a couple of years into college. too.

Following high school in Elkhart, Indiana, I came to The Municipal University of Wichita in 1957, as this was where my brother was studying as a Music major. I enrolled as a theater major and was very active in the program, graduating in 1961.

After a year where I taught one semester of high school English and Debate in Burrton, KS. I applied for Graduate School in Radio-TV-Film at the University of Kansas, was accepted, and became a Departmental, then Teaching, Assistant while completing my studies.

While there, on my own I produced another 8mm film, a 24-min. adaptation of E.A. Poe's, **The Black Cat**. I entered it in the "Robert J. Flaherty International Film Competition," sponsored by a filmmaking magazine, and won second place. That was published in the magazine and the Photographic Society of America, located in California, then contacted me and requested I enter their annual film competition in California. It won second place there, as well with all other nine winners having shot in 16mm. I won their screenwriting award for it, too.

At the University of Kansas for Dr. Bruce Linton's Film Production class, I also produced a 10-min. parody of college life, **La Dolt's Vita**, which played at the Rock Chalk Review for a few years after I left.

I finished all graduate work but my master's thesis in 1964 and returned to Wichita. That fall, I got married and applied for positions at the local television stations. With the help of **La Dolt's Vita** as an example of my abilities, I was hired at the old channel 12, KTVH. I became what eventually was titled **Film Production Director**, producing commercials and documentaries, the bulk of which I conceived, wrote, directed, photographed, and edited.

Channel 12 had never won any local commercial production awards (ADDYS), and while there, I secured 17, including several five-state Regional awards and a National ADDY award, second-place award. I also won a Kansas Chamber of Commerce Award in 1969 for the two-year, half-hour documentary series, **This is Kansas**.

In 1970, notoriously fickle KTVH General Manager, M. Dale Larson, decided the station could **no longer afford** me, so I was on the street. Bob Walterscheid heard about it and called me. Thus, I was out of work for about a week. Walterscheid Productions had only been in business for a year or two.

I then began making both commercials and industrial films. Bob had been a salesman for KAKE-TV for years. For his own company, he secured business and did a lot of the writing. I still often wrote or re-wrote, and directed, photographed, and edited the product. We had several local clients like Pizza Hut and Rusty Eck Ford, as well as industrial accounts from around the state.

After about a year, however, Walterscheid Productions had financial problems and had to cut back, severely. I continued to work on a contingency basis, trying to help keep the company together. We had a bleak couple of years but slowly came back.



KAKE-TV station in the late 1950s.



Tom Leahy recording announcements.

Toward the end of that period, Tom Leahy came to work on a contingency basis, as well, writing and doing voice-overs. He and I, for example, traveled to Kent, Ohio, to produce an industrial for Cortez Motor Homes, an upscale product. We also went to the Continental Divide in Colorado in the dead of winter to produce films for Evinrude/Johnson snowmobiles.

In late '72 or early '73, Bob Walterscheid

came up with the concept of Rusty Eck as **Fordman**. The first commercial was fairly simple, with Rusty changing into his red and blue superhero costume to save innocent car buyers from other, unscrupulous dealers. Walterscheid Productions saturated the TV airwaves with the commercial, and within a week, I never met anyone who did not know Fordman was Rusty Eck. Eck's sales increased 28% over the previous February! I've never seen anything like it.

The second Fordman commercial was scheduled when Bob was going to be out of town, so he asked me to write it and get it filmed. I did, and he now proclaims it as the funniest commercial Walterscheid Productions ever made. In that one, Eck again saves victimized buyers, taking them in his flying red Mustang convertible to his dealership. He then **rides off into the sunset**, shown driving the Mustang into the old Sunset Motel on south Broadway.



Rusty Eck as Fordman.



Publicity still from the Modfather shoot.

The third Fordman commercial was conceived by Bob to be "Fordman vs. the Modfather. **The Godfather** was fairly recent at the time. In the commercial, the Mafia descends upon Rusty's dealership, looking for new wheels. When they don't like what they hear from the salesman, they open fire with machine and shot-guns, but Fordman jumps in front of the salesman, the bullets bounce from his chest, and he states, **Make me an offer I cannot refuse!** The Godfather, played by Walterscheid, himself, does so, and is instantly transformed into **The**

Modfather, a younger, hip, dude. I did some rewriting, filmed, directed, and edited.

Fordman Meets the Modfather won a pile of local Addys, that year (1973), **Best 60 second Commercial**, etc., and a **Best Cinematography Award** for me.

BSOH: Did you ever get to meet or work with the Centron director Herk Harvey or work with that production company?

LH: I never worked at Centron, though that would've been a great place to start a career. About a week after I moved to Lawrence to begin Graduate School, they held the premiere of **Carnival of Souls** at the old Granada Theatre. Wow! I still have my ticket stubs. What a creepy film, made on a small budget in a small town! Something I always wanted to do.

In my Film History class, I believe it was, we were required to write a term paper, and I called and scheduled an appointment with Herk Harvey to interview him regarding **Carnival of Souls**. He was very gracious and we discussed the production in his office for over an hour.

One thing I vividly recall was his telling me, "When we finished it, I went to Hollywood and toured distributors, trying to sell it. I was getting desperate, because American-International (a schlock sci-fi horror distributor) thought it was too 'arty,' while art film distributors thought it was just a cheesy horror film - not their cup of tea. I had investors back home that I just couldn't disappoint."

"Finally, Hertz-Lion, a British-backed company agreed to take it on a contingency basis. I never heard anything after that, and figured they'd just shelved it. Then, from friends in Europe, I started getting copies of ads and reviews from England, France, Italy, and so on. The film was playing everywhere but in the U.S.!"

It did, eventually, play here, too, of course. I'm not sure if Mr. Harvey ever got his money back, but as you know, it has become a cult-classic. Oh, and my landlady in Lawrence, 70-year-old Mrs. James Woods, played the church chairwoman who appears, briefly, near the beginning of the film.

BSOH: Early in your career, you made a short. The Wichita Film Society once showed it at the CAC Theater on a night of films made by local people and you used to use it for examples at lectures. What can you tell us about how you made it---how long was production, what did it cost, who is in it, and so on? Where was it shown originally?



Mrs. James Woods in COS.

LH: After four years of creating mainly commercials while at **KTVH**, I was feeling somewhat burned out. I was using an art form I loved just to sell stuff (and pay my bills, of course). Meanwhile, I had begun teaching one class, **Cinematography** at Wichita State in 1968. It was scheduled quite early, 7:30 a.m., I think, so I could get to work on time. But the class was generally full. And the kids were very enthusiastic and terrifically creative with the projects I assigned, never anything specific — make what you want to make, but make it good. They were shooting on Super 8mm by then, and any soundtrack came from a cassette recorder played while the little projector ran. Some of their work really inspired me to get back into the game of **make a film for yourself**, so that's where **I Love You** originated.

I began it in the fall of 1969, shooting in 16mm. The way to learn to make films is to make them, and I was still learning. It was artsy, with both B&W and color, weird camera angles, etc. Some worked; some didn't. But that's how you learn — by trying. Coincidentally, it is the story of a burned-out copywriter in an ad agency and his feelings of alienation from other people.

I had to leave **KTVH** in the middle of it, but employment with Walterscheid provided the facilities to continue working in 16mm. So, I wrapped it up within a few months. It starred Dr. Frank Kelly, who headed Radio-TV at Wichita State and was an occasional Wichita Community Theatre actor, a fellow faculty member, Ron Streeter's wife, Nancy, my stepfather, Bob Hutchison, my wife, Pat, and a stripper, Phyllis Pearson, who Walterscheid tracked down for me. I think it runs 17 minutes (haven't watched it for awhile), and cost about \$1,000 (a little over \$6,000 in today's dollars).

BSOH: You worked with Tom Leahy on projects by Walterscheid Productions, do you have any

stories you could share about that experience?

LH: I met Tom when I was a freshman in college — spring of 1958, I believe. He was doing **Nightmare** on **KAKE**, and as I've told you before, I loved that show! Just great and so funny, plus old Universal horror movies! Stu Melchart was a fellow student, a year or two older than me, and a deejay with Tom on the old **KAKE radio**, housed in the same building as the TV studio "Like it or not, it's the 1240 spot!" That came from them. Crazy stuff! Stu actually played a taxman, I think, in one of the **Nightmare** skits and he knew how much I liked the show. He took me over there and introduced me, and later, I showed Tom some of my high school films I cited in your opening question.

We became reacquainted in the summer of 1960, when I got a job at **KTVH** filling in for announcer/audio men who were on vacation. Tom worked everywhere in Wichita, TV and radio, at one time or another. He had an Irish temper and didn't suffer fools (i.e., management) gladly. Whatever, he was at Channel 12 at that time, doing **Nightmare** without any Rodney, oddly enough. He was also on the announcing staff. He wasn't there for long, either.

When I came back to Wichita from graduate school, he was at **Channel 3**, and had just finished **The Beast from the Beginning of Time**. I was invited to a private showing for a group of people. It was fun.

We didn't see each other a lot after that until he came to work at Walterschied's, in 1972 I think it was. Then, as I mentioned earlier, we worked on several projects together. We always had a lot of fun around the office, too. He did a great impersonation of John Wayne, and when I was writing the script for **King Kung Fu**, I needed cops chasing the gorilla and just knew Tom playing **Captain Duke** would be perfect. He was a little reluctant at first, but then bought into it and is one of the best and funniest characters in the film. You may recall, Walterscheid used him later, in commercials, doing that same impersonation.



Tom Leahy as Captian Duke.



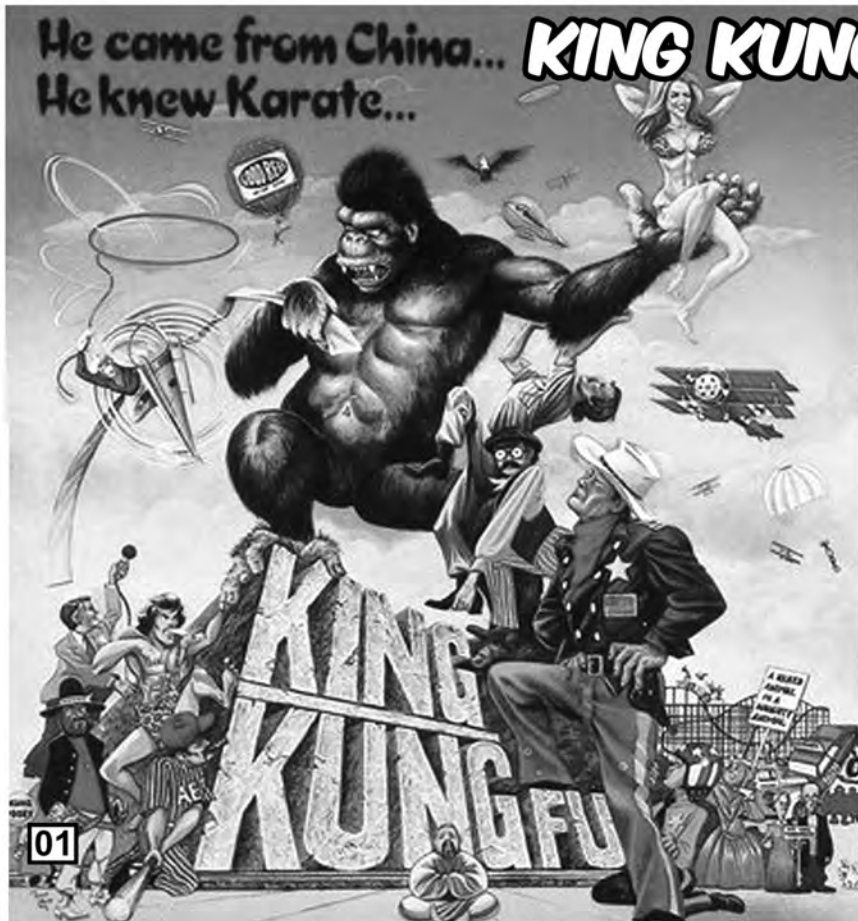
John Balee as King Kung Fu.

BSOH: How did the production of the film **King Kung Fu** come about and who came up with the concept and title for the film?

LH: In early 1974, Bob and I were driving downtown near the Holiday Inn, at that time the tallest building in Kansas. He said, "Wouldn't it be funny to do a commercial with Fordman battling King Kong on top of the Holiday Inn?" Well, we started kidding around about it and joked about a feature film called, **King Kung Fu**. At that time, the old Second Street bridge had been washed out by an ice flow and I said, "Hey, we could have people hollering, 'He

He came from China...
He knew Karate...

KING KUNG FU: PHOTO PAGE



Photos from the collection of Lance Hayes

Lance Hayes, photo notes

1. The films promo poster

2. Captain Duke (Tom Leahy) and Officer Pilgrim (Stephen S. Sisley) attack from the skies! This was a real helicopter and the engine and rotors worked. I don't know if it could actually fly, it was owned by The Wichita Technical Institute, I believe, and housed at Wichita's East High School. Wide shots were made against a front projection screen with a three-foot model I built, and animated by stop-motion photography ala Willis O'Brien. Its occupants were modified G.I. Joes dolls with costumes I also stitched together and animated one frame at a time.

3. Lance Hayes in the chase boat from the ill-fated Riverfest sequence, which was cut from the film. The balloon taking **King Kung Fu** (John Balee) and Rae Fey (Maxine Gray) to the top of the Holiday Inn in downtown Wichita.

4. This version was staged on the back of a truck bed, which was pushed slowly by the crew grips. It was framed to hide the rigging above the characters.

5. Shown in wide shots was a model of the balloon against a front projection screen of the real skyline and/or a model of the Holiday Inn.

6. Filming at the Sedgwick County Zoo. The **King Kung Fu** Task Force has arrived to capture the gorilla. The antique van was loaned to the production by the Kansas State Highway Patrol.

7. Jim Erickson in costume as **King Kung Fu's** mentor "Alfunku."

destroyed the bridge!" and cut to the debris — just dumb, idle chatter while we were driving. To my great surprise and disbelief, a few weeks later he announced to the press that we were going to make a feature film comedy titled, **King Kung Fu!**

Once Bob had announced it, he wanted me to film and direct. I was hesitant. Comedy is very difficult, and horror films are not only easier but certainly were at the time much easier to get into distribution. However, he was determined, and I always wanted to make a movie so I signed on. He was going to write the film and took a weekend at a motel to begin it. He soon found movie scripts aren't 30 or 60-second commercials. However, he was already raising money, and things were up in the air, so I asked to have a hand at the script. He was fine with that. This was in May of 1974, and the 4th or 5th **Annual Wicitennial River Festival** was coming up, so I quickly threw together a scenario to take advantage of that. We hadn't even done casting, of course, except for the gorilla. There wasn't yet a script, but we knew we wanted **King Kung Fu** loose and running around Wichita, so that seemed like a good opportunity for a start and to publicize the movie. That latter worked. We made the front page of the next day edition of Wichita's newspaper, the Eagle.

Sadly, the filming did not work, for a myriad of reasons. One example was John Balee, playing **King Kung Fu**, who was a local Karate instructor, lost one of his gorilla feet of his costume, which were like rubber slippers while out on the water, and as they went speeding by the crowd during the bathtub race, in front of the camera he kicked that foot high and it was just his pink foot! There was a lot more that went wrong, but you don't need the details. I tried to fix things with pickup shots later but decided when editing to just eliminate that entire scene. There were just too many unworkable problems.

It took me about a month (May and early June) to come up with a story and finish a first draft of the script, but by then we had to start production. Bob had made promises. In the interim, he had seen Maxine Finlay, who was listed as Maxine Grey in the credits when the film was finally released, modeling in a local version of **Playboy** and cast her for the female lead. She had no acting experience at all.

We then spent a weekend casting the rest of the roles, at the old Airport Motel and had about 300 applicants for the production. We didn't find the **Bo Burgess** lead role from those auditions. However, Tim McGill, **Herman**, came up with Billy Schwartz from the gunfighters at Wichita's outdoor historical museum Cowtown, and Billy had potential. So he got that part and we began shooting. The script needed serious revision — at the very least a second draft — but there was no time, so I often rewrote on the fly. The production was chaotic and ragged.

Sad to say, the chaos never went away over what turned into a three-year production period, also counting the editing. And Walterscheid ran out of money, and again fell on hard times. I'd had a very small stipend during the production, banking on my contracted percentage of the profits, but for the final six months of editing, didn't even receive that. I, too, ran out of money but had put two and a half years of 24-7 into **King Kung Fu**, and I finished the last six months of editing with no income at all.

Years later, without my input, Bob had some minor re-editing done, mostly in the beginning of the film, but it made little sense to me when I finally saw the result.

BSOH: The montage of **King Kung Fu** wandering through Wichita originally had the song **King Kung Fu, What Are You?** on the soundtrack. How was that band found?

LH: Actually, **King Kung Fu, What Are You?** was meant for the opening credits. I helped write some of the lyrics for **King Kung Fu, What Are You?**, but don't really remember the name of the kid who lead the band. Bob Walterscheid came up with that band, I can't recall their name. I don't know how he found them. They wrote that song, which was a bit lame, and **The Gorilla Rag** which ended up being used for the closing credits, at least in the theater. I assume it's the same on the DVD. I have a copy but have never watched it. **The Gorilla Rag** was originally intended for use in the scene atop the Holiday Inn, when Bo and King Kung Fu start dancing along the edge of the roof instead of fighting. I like it where it is, however. It would've just bogged down the "Karater/Karate" showdown. I'd had no relationship with Bob for almost 10 years, but made contact with him at that point. I then become part of the premiere at the **Crest**.



BSOH: You taught the **Intro to Film** class at **Wichita State University** for a number of years, I'm sure you have interesting stories about that experience. Could you share a few with us?

LH: At the time I had left working for Walterscheid Productions, I was fortunately invited to teach fulltime at Wichita State in Radio-TV, as they had an unfilled position and the start of the semester loomed near. I was able to resume teaching my Cinematography class, but Bela Kiralyfalvi, the Speech Department head also wanted to begin a Film Studies class. So, I came up with a concept and taught it for those two semesters in a regular classroom.

After that academic year concluded in the spring, I went to work as News Director, and eventually Program Director, at **KMUW-FM**, the **WSU** student station, then associated with **NPR** and requiring a professional staff. Since **KMUW** personnel were required to teach one class each semester, I was able to retain my Cinematography course. Dr. Frank Chorba, the new hire, took over the **Intro to Film Studies** class, moved it to a night class, and made it basically film history.

I liked scheduling the class at night-bigger enrollment. I retained some of the film history aspects, but took it more into the analysis of how film communicates. By starting with very early silent films and working our way forward, I was able to show how the language of film evolved as audiences became more sophisticated. For example, the Lumiere Brothers of France, early pioneers in filmmaking, made **Train arrival in the station of La Ciotat** had a locomotive coming almost directly toward the camera, and though it wasn't in color or 3-D, audiences were frightened and headed for the doors. **The Great Train Robbery**, made for Edison, employed **parallel editing**, which cut back and forth between two events happening at the same time. This confused audiences who expected a straight, linear experience.

It was always so much fun (and rewarding) to see this dawning on students, and comparing their opinions of the meaning and importance of certain films, both with the other kids and with myself. Getting them to analyze beyond the "simple entertainment" factor of movie-making was exciting and I hope, enlightening.

BSOH: Are you working on any film projects now? Is there a pet project you'd like to do if you could?



Lance Hayes with his wife Pat Hayes.

LH: Converting my high school movies to digital, **The Cullen/Hayes '50's Film Fest**, was the last thing I've done along those lines. I actually produced it on SVHS in 1992. Along with that, I made **The '50's Film Fest - 60 Years Later**, a short commentary by me on those films made a lifetime ago. It runs about 10 minutes.



In 2011 King Kung Fu has a revival screening at the Orpheum Theater in Wichia, Kansas.

I wish I had the resources, and more importantly, the energy, I'm 76 with a few health problems, to make another movie or two, but I don't really see that happening.

Editors note: In 1996 Lance Hayes took a position as the director of **KBTL-FM** at the Butler County Community college in El Dorado, Kansas, also serving as an instructor in the film department. **KBTL-FM** and the Radio-TV-Film program has won many awards from the Kansas Association of Broadcasters, he worked there until he retired in 2009.

UFO

COLD CASES: KANSAS

SECRET
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FILES

1947-1961

DECLASSIFIED

DAVE TOPLIKAR

FEATURED IN BASEMENT SUBLET
OF HORROR MAGAZINE, ISSUE #4

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A HISTORICAL LISTING OF HORROR HOSTS IN KANSAS & MISSOURI

FEATURING THE WRITINGS AND RESEARCH OF ARTIST



AN INTRODUCTION BY GUNTHER DEDMUND

A history of horror hosts in Kansas is a topic that I've been wanting to cover for some time. This turned out to be a much bigger project than we expected since there are quite a number of television hosts in the Kansas area. For this issue, we will be covering all currently known TV horror movie hosts and movie hosts in Kansas and Missouri as there is a lot of cross-over content on the various television stations in the area.

HORROR HOSTS: AN UNOFFICIAL HISTORY

From the earliest times, there has been a tradition of storytelling around campfires for warmth and community. In that dark and mysterious firelight, is the perfect setting for horror stories. This could possibly be the origin of a storyteller somewhat like the kind seen in the guise of the modern horror host.

The Horror Host is a narrator who presents disturbing tales to his audience. The character of the host first appeared on radio serials, creating continuity between otherwise unrelated stories. There were many hosted shows featuring horror or suspense that brought listeners into other-worldly realms through the medium, which relied almost upon more on the listeners imagination rather than using direct visual shocks.

Shows such as **The Inner Sanctum**, **Light's Out**, and **The Shadow** all featured creepy hosts that led listeners through stories of suspense. Already in pulp magazines in the 1930s, then in comic books, most notably EC Comics titles like **Tales from the Crypt**. Later in the 1970s, **Warren Publishing's** black and white comic magazines had several included several popular hosts including Uncle Creepy (**Creepy magazine**), Cousin Eerie (**Eerie magazine**), and, of course, Vampirella, all of whom were an inspiration for countless hosts to follow.



Cover of the Shock Horror Package Press Kit.

The early horror hosts were based on a marketing strategy devised by **Universal Studios** to market their horror titles to television stations across the country as the **Universal Studios Shock Package**, the studio saw the films as dead properties at that time. **Shock Package** had a roster of 52 films, including almost all of the early Universal horror films that are now considered classics. It was successful enough to have a follow-up package called **Son of Shock** that included another 20 films. The original horror hosts were often TV station personnel who had a wider range of broadcasting experience, such as acting or writing, and who served different roles at the stations including announcers, broadcast personnel, and other behind the scenes jobs. Many horror host programs based their concepts and theme on suggestions that were included in the **Shock Horror Package** press-kit.

During the 1950s and 1960s, a number of Horror Hosts haunted television viewers across North America. There were numerous local presenters creating low-budget shows based around cheap B-Movies. Sometimes, the host vehicle was used to tie together otherwise unrelated material into a single episode for broadcast. By the 1980s, the genre had nearly died out completely — possibly due in part to changing audience tastes, but more likely due to general cost-cutting that resulted in the end of most locally produced non-news programming in favor of syndicated fare.

CONTEMPORARY HORROR HOSTS

There were several books that proved to be inspirational to the later run of horror hosts, in particular, **Dick Smith's Famous Monsters Makeup handbook**, **Movie Monsters** by Alan Ormsby (Scho-lastic), **Television Horror Movie Hosts: 68 Vampires, Mad Scientists and other Denizens of the Late-Night Airwaves Examined and Interviewed** by Elena M. Watson. Elena documented the low-budget likes of Ghoulardi, Sir Graves Ghastly, and Dr. Maximilian Madblood. "The shows," she said, "offered a certain energy, originality, and creativity the slicker network stuff lacked. They were not mass-produced. There was an underlying level of subversion to them."

Editor's note: There is a tribute page to Elena...



SHOCK! ORDER BLANK — PROMOTION MATERIAL

Catalog No.	Title	Still Pictures	Mats — Mat Proofs	Backdrop
693	THE BLACK CAT			
694	CALLING DR. DEATH			
695	THE CAT CREEPS			
696	CHINATOWN SQUAD			
697	DANGER WOMAN			
698	A DANGEROUS GAME			
699	DEAD MAN'S EYES			
700	DESTINATION UNKNOWN			
701	DRACULA			
702	DRACULA'S DAUGHTER			
703	ENEMY AGENT			
704	FRANKENSTEIN			
705	FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN			
706	THE FROZEN GHOST			
707	THE GREAT IMPERSONATION			
708	HORROR ISLAND			
709	HOUSE OF HORRORS			
710	THE INVISIBLE MAN			
711	THE INVISIBLE MAN RETURNS			
712	THE INVISIBLE RAY			
713	THE LAST WARNING			
714	THE MAD DOCTOR OF MARKET STREET			
715	THE MAD GHOUL			
716	MAN-MADE MONSTER			
717	THE MAN WHO CRIED WOLF			
718	THE MUMMY			
719	THE MUMMY'S GHOST			
720	THE MUMMY'S HAND			
721	THE MUMMY'S TOMB			
722	MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE			
723	THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD			
724	THE MYSTERY OF MARIE ROGET			
725	MYSTERY OF THE WHITE ROOM			
726	NIGHT KEY			
727	NIGHTMARE			
728	NIGHT MONSTER			
729	PILLOW OF DEATH			
730	THE RAVEN			
731	REPORTED MISSING			
732	SEALED LIPS			
733	THE SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM			
734	SECRET OF THE CHATEAU			
735	SHE-WOLF OF LONDON			
736	SON OF DRACULA			
737	SON OF FRANKENSTEIN			
738	THE SPIDER WOMAN STRIKES BACK			
739	THE SPY RING			
740	THE STRANGE CASE OF DOCTOR RX			
741	WEIRD WOMAN			
742	WEREWOLF OF LONDON			
743	THE WITNESS VANISHES			
744	THE WOLF MAN			

Watson posted on horror host Doctor Madblood's website, also in 2011 Jason Hignite (producer of the annual **Horror Host Hall of Fame** event) inducted Elena Watson into the **Horror Host Hall of Fame**.



There have been several resurgences of the horror host television format, after the initial early runs from the 1950s and 1970s. The 1980s saw a nationwide comeback with a number of popular hosts appearing, many who were either replacing early hosts or paying homage to hosts who'd left established shows. The '80s were rich with some of the better-known hosts, such as Elvira, Count Gore De Vol, and Crematia Mortem. There also were a number of hosts who made comebacks, including Wichita's The Host with a new run of shows based on original scripts from the early run of the show. Nostalgia reached a new peak after the turn of the century with the new age of online self-produced video, all competing for space on the world wide web.

The peak of this new wave occurred when Jason Hignite started a horror host convention called **The Gothic Gathering** in 2010, which was staged as part of the convention **Horrorhound Weekend** a bi-annual event in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 2011, there was an attempt to set a **Guinness World Record** for the most horror hosts in one place when over 100 of the new generation hosts attended that year's event. Currently, the previous generations of horror hosts are being paid tribute by being inducted into the new **Horror Host Hall of Fame**, which is supported by the **Ripley's Believe It or Not** museums.



The following is a listing of all of the horror hosts from the Kansas and Missouri areas; it's a work in progress since more hosts will be added to the list. It is based on the writings of Bradley Beard from his horror host portrait project and he's allowed us to use his works for this project. BSOH (Basement Sublet of Horror) fills in the blanks in between for hosts that weren't included in the Beard horror host project. Some of the hosts listed don't have much information available so these listings will be updated too. There may be more hosts that we missed, if you have any further information, photos, or audio/visual media about the Kansas/Missouri hosts please send it to us.

Special thanks to Bradley Beard and all the horror hosts across America who've made this media so strong and interesting. **Contact Gunther** at this email address for any additions, revisions, questions, or comments: gunther@basementsubletofhorror.com

Editor's note: The content is labeled by the author with (BB) for Bradley Beard and (BSOH).

1950S - 1970S

THE HOST: NIGHTMARE



(Broadcast in **Wichita**)

The hour for nightmare is once again at hand. **The Host** played by Tom Leahy, host of **Nightmare** on **KAKE-TV Channel 10** from 1958 to 1959, then continued on **KWCH-TV Channel 12** in Wichita, KS another year. The show was resurrected in color in 1969 on **KSNW-TV Channel 3** in Wichita, KS, and ran until 1971. **The Host** was joined by his mute miscreant sidekick Rodney who was played by Lee Parsons in the original show; Jim Herring took over the role of Rodney in 1969 in the revamped color version. Leahy revisited the role for one last run in the 1990s with John Salem playing Rodney. Known for his verbose ramblings, Leahy created a uniquely stylized and effectively creepy vocal tonality that emphasized his alliteration laden discourses. **Nightmare** was an extremely wellwritten and flawlessly executed show, due in no small part to the tremendous talent of Leahy. **Editor's Note:** read more on the history of Tom Leahy in BSOH Magazine #3 (BSOH)

GREGORY GRAVES



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

"Good evening, fright fiends." I present **Gregory Grave**, host of **Shock Theatre** on **KMBC-TV Channel 9** in Kansas City, MO. **Shock Theatre** began on September 20, 1958 and ran for approximately four years, the show's title changed to **Chiller** sometime in the early 1960s. Gregory was played by station director and staff announcer Harvey Brunswick. Grave's fans fondly remember his "Boo Shoes" after announcing the movie, he would lean back in his chair and place his feet on his desk to reveal the word "Boo" on the bottom of his shoes. Gregory's sidekick was a talking skull named Cranston Cranium; they were joined by Herman the Horrible, a dummy that wore a horrible mask, and Cynthia Strangler, a mannequin dresses in ragged clothing. Brunswick once recounted in an interview that once during filming, a flash pot malfunctioned filled the studio with smoke and the camera couldn't see him. (BB)

MARILYN THE WITCH



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

I present **Marilyn the Witch**, hostess of The Witching Hour on **KCMO-TV Channel 5** in Kansas City, MO, which began in 1958. **Marilyn** was played by Dolores Denny otherwise known as Dodo or Nora Denny. **Marilyn** was Kansas City's answer to the "Vampira" craze of the late 1950s. She was so popular that the station created daytime spots where she gave non-horror related advice on subjects such as gardening. Denny later moved to Hollywood where she became a character actress and could be seen on TV shows such as **Bewitched**, **Green Acres**, **Get Smart**, **Petticoat Junction**, and numerous others. Her most famous movie role was that of Mrs. TeeVee in the movie **Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory**. (BB)

1950S - 1970S

PENNY DREADFUL



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

Her costume seemed more suited for hosting sci-fi than horror. Tonight I present **Penny Dreadful**, hostess of **Son of Chiller** **KMBC-TV** Channel 9 in Kansas City, MO, which ran during the early 1960s. Penny was played by Rose Marie Earp; she wore a long black robe with a wide white collar and a head piece that came to a point on her forehead making her look more like a cosmic nun than a horror host. The show began as the camera panned over several painted castle backdrops, eventually panning in on Penny as she stood in a darkened window ready to announce the evening's movie. According to sources, **Son of Chiller** was shown early Saturday evening around 6:30 pm and **Gregory Grave's Chiller** on **KMBC** was shown late Saturday evening around 10:30 pm. What a treat for Kansas City kiddies of that era, two different horror hosts both on the same channel.

THE CREEPER



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**, syndicated)

He was the last of the legacy. I present The Creeper, host of **Jeepers Creepers Theatre** on **KCOP-TV** Channel 13 in Los Angeles, CA. **The Creeper** was a tragic figure, a silent screen actor who was horribly disfigured in an accident that occurred during filming. After his accident, his only friends were **Jeepers**, **Ghoulita**, and **Jeeper's Keeper**; the three former hosts of **Jeepers Creepers Theatre**. **The Creeper** lived in the deserted sound stage left to him by his friends, the former departed hosts. In the fourth and final incarnation of the show, the show's creator himself took the stage. Jim Sullivan played **The Creeper** from June 1965 to March 1966. Sullivan was the original creative mastermind behind JCT, writing and producing all of the shows. **Jeepers Creepers Theatre** was a brilliant, atmospheric horror host "wrap" for the movies being shown. Little footage exists of these shows, but what does, is horror hosting gold. (BB)

MOONA LISA



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**, also in syndication)

This interstellar stunner reigns as San Diego's longest running horror host. I present **Moona Lisa**, hostess of Science Fiction Theatre on **KOGO-TV** Channel 10 in San Diego, CA, which ran from 1963 to 1971. **Moona** later hosted **Fright Night** on **KHJ-TV** Channel 9 in Los Angeles, CA, **Moona Lisa's Creature Features** on **KFMB-TV** in San Diego, CA, and **Moona's Midnight Madness** on **KMOX-TV** Channel 4 in St. Louis, MO. Cosmosina, San Diego's first horror host, was replaced by **Moona Lisa** after only two months. It's quite evident that **Moona** was as much or more of an attraction on the show as the movies she hosted. The show featured sets made to resemble the surface of the moon. **Moona** inflected moon jargon into her speech and modeled 1960s mod space chic clothing. She was played by Lisa Clark. (BB)

1950S - 1970S

BARON VON CRYPT



(Broadcast in St. Louis, **Missouri**)

Another all but forgotten horror host. I present **Baron Von Crypt**, host of **Baron Von Crypt** on **KDNL-TV Channel 30** in St. Louis, MO, an alternate name for the show may have been Shock Week but can't be confirmed. The show aired sometime during the 1970s, the exact dates are unknown. The show is a bit of a mystery as no further information exists online. What does exist, however, is one amazing 17:00 montage clip that can be found on YouTube; I found a cool TV guide ad for the show as well. It appears from the video clip, that **The Baron** is an extremely talented artist and composer... or DE-composer as the case may be. **The Baron** was joined by his seldom seen, wise cracking side kick Igor. Full of horrifically bad one-liners, the show was actually quite punny. It's sad though that so little of **The Baron** remains... think about it. (BB)

SINISTER SEYMOUR



(National Syndicated, **Wichita & Kansas City**)

"Master of the macabre, the epitome of evil, the most sinister man to crawl on the face of the earth, Seeeeeeeeeeymore!" I present **Sinister Seymour**, host of Fright Night on **KHJ-TV Channel 9** in Los Angeles, CA, which ran from 1969 to 1972. He also hosted Monster Rally in 1973 on KTLA-TV Channel 5 and then went back to **KHJ-TV** in 1974 to host Seymour Presents.

Seymour was played by Larry Vincent. Vincent got his start as the host of the **Captain Starr** TV show on **WFBM-TV Channel 6** in Indianapolis, IN. **Seymour's** wardrobe consisted of wide black brimmed hat and a black cape. He hosted the show in front of The Slimy Wall, guests would appear from behind the wall and off-screen happenings would occur behind the wall. Vincent imbued **Seymour** with a deadly wry sense of humor, a role that he seemed to truly enjoy. In closing his show, he would always wish the viewer, **Bad Evening**. (BB)

NIGHTWATCH WITH OL' FLICK



(Broadcast in **Wichita**)

Following his appearance as **Dr. Greymatter** who hosted the Basil Rathbone Sherlock Holmes movies, **KAKE-TV** in Wichita purchased a package of old movies and deciding to show them on late night TV. Jim Erickson was chosen to become the host of the show which became **Nightwatch with Ol' Flick**. The show ran for a number of years from the late '70s throughout the '80s, even going to a nearly all night format for several years. (BSOH)

Editor's Note: read more on Jim Erickson in BSOH magazine, issue #2.

HORROR HOST SCRAPBOOK

PAGE ONE



Joe Bob Briggs on Monstervision.



A classic weirdo presents
a classic Fringee Feature!

THURSDAY
6:30 pm

10 13 (|||||)
kakeland

TV Guide article on midwest horror hosts.



Above: Dolores Denney appears as Marilyn the Witch on *The Witching Hour* over KCMO-TV, Kansas City, Mo. Below: Ray Sporenberg, Jr., is seen as Selwyn on the *Horror Late Show* over WISH-TV, in Indianapolis.



The two-faced lady and gentlemen pictured here are among the many television personalities who have found new careers as emcees of TV's horror-movie programs. All of them work for stations in the Midwest. On camera, they are seen in the garb and make-up of gleeful ghouls. Some of them have become so closely identified with their work that it may be difficult to remember that they are, after all, real people. To re-establish their identities, they are presented here as they appear on camera, and as they were before the vampire struck.



Left: Harvey Brunswick—Gregory Grove on *Shock!*, KMBC-TV, Kansas City, Mo. Above: Tom Leahy (left), Lee Parsons as *The Host* and Rodney, *Nightmare*, originating from KAKE-TV, Wichita, Kan. Below: Gregg Dunn—Gregory, KMTV, Omaha.



1980S - 1990S

MISTY BREW



(Broadcast in **Missouri**)

Good evening human creatures, the bloody sun is about to set and the bloody fun is about to begin. I present to you, **Misty Brew**, hostess of **Creature Feature** on **KBSI-TV 23** Fox Affiliated Station for Paducah, Kentucky, Harrisburg, Illinois, and Cape Girardeau, Missouri; a show which ran from 1985 until late 1989. In 2014, **Misty** was back for blood as she returned to host her shows on Kreepy Kastle. Legend has it that **Misty** was born on October 31, 1666; she is what some might refer to as undying beauty. Her batty sense of humor is one of her most alluring qualities; she'll make you laugh as you scream bloody murder. **Misty** is very upbeat and loves a good time so don't be a pain in her neck or she'll surely be a pain in yours. However, I suppose if you've got to go, I'll bet that you couldn't imagine a better way. (BB)

COUNT NORLOCK



(Broadcast in **Missouri**)

"A wayward girl has just ventured up my castle path." Today I present **Count Norlock**, host of **The Late Night Horror Show** on **KSPR Channel 33** in Springfield, Missouri, which began on April 21, 1989 and unfortunately lasted only one season. **Norlock** was extremely well portrayed by local actor Jim Kellett, who sported an incredible make-up job by Joe Bauer. The show was shot to look like vintage B&W classic horror cinema and was acted out like a macabre soap opera spoof. The set design was brilliant, the interior of the castle being immaculately detailed. Women were unnaturally drawn to the Count's castle like flies, **Norlock** was quite the ladies' man with those crazy hypnotic eyes and his powers of incantation. If you should ever find yourself drawn to his castle, try not to ask, "Does this place have spiders?" because it most certainly does... one named **Norlock**. (BB)

CREMATIA MORTEM



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

"As you can no doubt see, I put on my skull cap which gives me extraordinary powers of divination... or deviation as the case may be." I present the ghostess with the mostess, **Miss Crematia Mortem**. She hosted **Creature Feature/Crematia's Friday Nightmare** on **KSHB Channel 41** in Kansas City, Missouri which began in 1982 and ended on January 1, 1990. **Crematia** was joined by her two man servants Dweeb and Rasputin who were heard but never seen. **Crematia** was inducted into the **Horror Host Hall of Fame** by **Horrorhound Magazine** and **Ripley's Believe It or Not**. She has since retired from horror hosting and with the help of her talented friend Roberta Solomon, she is trying to develop skills and acclimate to a normal life. I guess we'll have to wait and see what the future holds for **Crematia**. (BB) **Editors Note:** Read more on **Crematia** in **BSOH Magazine #2**

kcmo tv 5

**Friday Fright Night
Fright tonight 10:30**



**Tonight, Moona Lisa
gives you the shock of your life.**



Moona Lisa, a voluptuous inhabitant of the moon, has come to St. Louis to guide us through a series of spine-tingling movies.

SHOCK

COMES TO KANSAS CITY



Saturday at 9:30, Gregory presents

FRANKENSTEIN

With parts scavenged from morgues, graves, and gibbets, Dr. Frankenstein makes a man. See this greatest of all horror classics on the Channel 9 Spooktacular **9:30**



Saturday is Fright Night on Channel **9**

Wichita's Ol' Flick in his living room 1986



**Baron Von Crypt
Wants You!**

Join the Baron this week
on the 8o'clock movie for
Shock Week!



TV30
THE ENTERTAINERS **23**

1980S - 1990S

ED MUSCARE



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

He began producing **Friday Night at the Frights** starring **Edmus Scarey**. Muscare also hosted in Kansas City as **Mr. Mummy** for **Mr. Mummy Movie Time** on **KCIT**, **The Creeper** (also known as **Cousin Creeper**) on **Channel 41, KSHB**, **All Night Live with Uncle Ed** on **KSHB** 1981-1985. **Uncle Ed** had a huge following, and every night thousands of viewers. **Uncle Ed** opened every show with a viewers creed: "I promise every night at eleven, I will tune into **All Night Live**, A faithful viewer I'll always be, I'm not handin' you no jive." (BSOH)

HUGHY THE GHOUL



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

Hughy the Ghoul the Disembodied Skull who hosted **KCTV 5's Friday Fright Night**, a local Kansas City late night horror movie show from the 1980s, with the host Hugh Bowen laughing and that famous disembodied skull. (BSOH)

ELVIRA



(National Syndicated, **Wichita & Kansas City**)

Everybody knows her and everybody loves her. I present **Elvira**, hostess of **Movie Macabre** which began in 1981 in Los Angeles, California. **Elvira's** valley girl attitude combined with her gothic chic fashion sense, created an incredibly fresh character that captivated her viewer's attention. Her smart, quick humor set her apart; her double entendres and womanly wiles kept her audiences wanting more. The movie **Elvira, Mistress of the Dark** was brilliantly clever; a hilarious comedy cult classic that will live on with audiences for decades. Elvira quickly evolved into her own brand producing comic books, action figures, costumes, trading cards, pinball machines, Halloween décor, dolls, model kits, and even her own beer, Elvira's Night Brew. Today I honor Cassandra Peterson, a truly amazing lady with an incredibly inspiring career. She is **Elvira** and she is the best! (BB)

GUSTOPHER GLITCH



(Broadcast in **Wichita**)

It doesn't take a full moon to turn Eric Branson into his creepy alter ego, **Gustopher Glitch**. All it takes is for the Wichita actor to turn and face the television camera. Suddenly, tuxedoed **Gustopher** oozes right out, wringing his hands adorned with 19th century fingerless gloves, patting down his greasy hair parted in the middle, adjusting his wire-rimmed glasses and cackling at his own jokes like Peter Lorre high on swamp gas as the replacement host for **Friday Nightmare** on **KAKE**, Channel 10. Branson captured the assignment over 84 other would-be horror hosts during open auditions held in 1982, not so much for costuming and makeup as for his developing a characterization from within. **Gustopher Glitch** hosted the show for over two years from 1982 - 1983 (based on Bob Curtright's original write up, BSOH)

1980S - 1990S

ADDITIONAL HOSTS:

GILBERT GOTTFRIED (National, Syndicated)

Host of **USA Up All Night** which aired on the USA Network from Jan. 7, 1989, to Feb. 1998.

CAROLINE SCHLITT (National, Syndicated)

Hostess of **USA Up All Night**, appearing halfway through the first season leaving in Dec. 1990.

RHONDA SHEAR (National, Syndicated)

Hostess of **USA Up All Night** which aired on the USA Network from Jan. 7, 1989 to Feb. 1998.

COMMANDER USA (National, Syndicated)

Host of **Commander USA's Groovie Movies** on the **USA Network**, which premiered on January 5, 1985, and ran through the Fall of 1989.

PENN & TELLER (National, Syndicated)

The famous duo hosted **Monstervision** movie marathons in 1993 to 1996

JOE BOB BRIGGS (National, Syndicated)

Host of **Joe Bob's Drive-In Theatre** on **The Movie Channel**, which he hosted from 1986 to 1996. Briggs took over as host of **Monstervision** on **TNT**, which had previously been presented as specials hosted by Penn & Teller. **Joe Bob** hosted **Monstervision** from 1996 to 2000.

JOEL ROBINSON & MIKE NELSON (National, Syndicated)

Host of **Mystery Science Theatre 3000** which premiered on **KTMA-TV** Channel 23 in Minneapolis, MN on November 24, 1988. The show ran on **KTMA** until May 1989, at which it was canceled due to the station's financial failings. The show was one of the first programs to be picked up by **Comedy Channel**, which retooled the show and aired it for six more seasons. After a fan-based write-in campaign, the show was picked up by the **Sci-fi Channel** where it ran for the final three seasons. Joel Robinson was played by Joel Hodgson, the master mind behind **MST3K**. Hodgson left the show halfway through Season Five, Hodgson was replaced by series writer Mike Nelson for the duration of the series. (BB)

ANGUS SCUMM (Wichita) Began in Wichita auditioning for the **KAKE-TV** Nightmare reboot, moved to Florida in the mid-1989s producing more episodes there, reviving the show later.

2000S

UNCLE ROY HOGGINS



(Broadcast online from **Kansas City**)

You might just find his picture in the dictionary under politically incorrect... he probably pasted it there himself and it's wise not to ask what he used for glue. By popular demand and numerous requests, I present **Uncle Roy Hoggins**, host of **Stink-O-Rama** which debuted in October 2005. **Uncle Roy's** early life was spent on the road with numerous sideshows and carnivals. Some folks speculate that **Uncle Roy** has fathered as many as 120 children, give or take a few. **Uncle Roy** is joined by Dobbs the Wee, a dwarf who **Roy** won in a poker game back in 1979. The show is a heaping helping of twisted black humor that is sure to leave you laughing or offended; needless to say it's not for children. **Uncle Roy** has been known to host a horror movie or two but the show mainly features clips of a sick and bizarre nature. (BB)

2000S

GUNTHER DEDMUND



(Broadcast in **Lawrence, Kansas**)

Oh, the horror of it all, he just keeps coming back and coming back. He loves to torture you and he just can't stop. I present **Gunther Dedmund**, host of **The Basement Sublet of Horror** which premiered in 2006 on Lawrence, Kansas **Public Access Channel 99**. The show still airs on public access channels across the country and can be seen on the internet via Livestream, Vimeo, YouTube, and The Internet Archive. **Gunther** collects horror cinema; his collection lives in his basement with him. **Dedmund** is a virtual well of knowledge... a deep dark well that holds horrific secrets. Should you dare to ask what he knows, he might tell you things that you weren't meant to know. **Gunther** does have handy knowledge as well, for instance, if Gamera should ever happen to poop on your house, he has a solution that'll help you to turn a profit. **Gunther** is looking for a new basement to sublet... are there any takers? (BB)

WOLFMAN MAC



(MeTV in **Wichita**, syndicated)

"Hey wolf pack, welcome back to the old haunted drive-in". I present **Wolfman Mac**, host of **Wolfman Mac's Chiller Drive-in**, which began on airing on public access TV in 2006 and on **MyTV20** in 2007 in Detroit, Michigan. The show later became nationally syndicated on the **Retro Television Network** and was shown in over 125 markets across the US. **Wolfman Mac** is the owner of a spooky drive-in theatre in Hauntington Heights which he runs with the help of his diminutive buddy Boney Bob. An educated werewolf, **Mac** received his Monster's degree from Scare U in order to pursue his entrepreneurial nightmares as a business owner. **Chiller Drive-in** is a hilarious excursion into lycanthropic lunacy. So if you're looking for a howling good time, hop on down to **Chiller Drive-in** for some cheesy B movie madness. (BB)

MARLENA MIDNITE & ROBYN GRAVES (Broadcast in **Kansas City**, syndicated)



Her story doesn't start at the beginning, it begins at the end. After a fatal car accident, this dearly departed young lady returned from the grave to become a horror hostess. I present **Marlena Midnite**, host of **Midnite Mausoleum** which premiered its first internet episode in April 2009. When her show reached its end in 2013, it was featured on over 60 public access stations across the country. To the relief of her undying legion of fans, like its hostess, the show returned from the grave in fall 2014 on station **WQAD MyTV** channel 8-3 in the Quad Cities. **Marlena** exudes that quaint Midwestern charm; in fact she is the shining example of the girl next door... if you live next door to a cemetery that is. **Robyn** is the delivery girl for the Midnite Mail Service and she is also **Marlena's** best living human friend. (BB)

2000S

EVELLE LECHAT



(Broadcast in **Kansas/Arkansas**, syndicated)

Just take one look and you won't have to wonder for long why she's referred to as "The Vixen of Vamp." I present **Evelle LeChat**, hostess of **Night Frights** on cable access in Conway, Arkansas. At the 2010 Horror Hound weekend in Indianapolis, **Evelle** won a national Vampira look-alike search contest. She is sexy, sultry, and quick with her witty banter; her horror hostess persona is both inviting and entertaining. **Evelle** is the embodiment of mystery; she has revealed herself through the eons, only leaving questions in her wake. She evokes an enigmatic worldly charm, at times it could possibly even be considered...otherworldly. She is a woman with exotic desires... she always enjoys her pizza with extra eyeballs. Her show returned in 2015 in reruns on the Roku channel **BetaMax TV**. (BB)

BUTCH R. CLEAVER



(Broadcast in **Cincinnati/Kansas**, syndicated)

Everyone's invited to his cocktail parties. I present **Butch R. Cleaver**, host of **Meet Cleaver Theatre** on **Time Warner Cable Channel 4** in Cincinnati, OH, which began in 2003. **Meet Cleaver Theater** also offers Sub-Atomic broadcasts on Veoh, condensed snippets of their two-hour show. **MCT** is this first new horror hosted show originating in Cincinnati since the **Cool Ghoul**. **Butch** worked as a mechanical engineer in the late 1950s. One evening while working on an experiment, **Butch** caused an explosion creating a time-warp which hurled him and his family into the future. During the accident, **Butch** lost his depth perception and is now forced to wear 3-D glasses. His wife, **Joan E. Cleaver**, lost her pretty little head... which **Butch** preserved in a jar and wired for sound. **The Cleavers** are hosting's first "Post-Nuclear" family and entertainment is their weapon of mass distraction. **Butch** has been a guest host on the Lawrence, Kansas, based show **The Basement Sublet of Horror** on numerous occasions. (BB)

UNCLE GREGORY



(Broadcast in **Missouri**)

Don't waste your time watching that talentless bum Baron Bones! I present **Uncle Gregory**, host of **The New Uncle Gregory Horror Hour** on **KOZL Channel 27** in Springfield, MO, every Saturday night at 11 p.m.; episodes can also be viewed on YouTube. The premise of the show is that in the decades past, **Uncle Gregory** was at the top of the Horror Host food chain... that is until Baron Bones came along, appealing to the younger and usurped **Uncle Gregory's** horror host throne. Needless to say, the Baron is **Gregory's** arch enemy and their rivalry is legendary. **Uncle Gregory**, not one to accept defeat so easily, began to air his own illegally broadcast independent horror hosted brand of macabre mayhem with his co-host Chant the talking skull. (BB)

2000S

TERRIBLE TIM



(Broadcast in **Kansas City**)

He's the world's most horrible horror host. I present **Terrible Tim**, host of **Drive-In Movie Maniacs** on **JCCC-TV** in Kansas City, MO. The first punch is thrown in its black and white presentation; a brilliant nod to the 1950s drive-in era. It's a high octane Molotov cocktail of edgy, punk rock infused horror hosting at its finest. **Tim** interviews the ghoulest artists, bands, and celebrity guests such as Hollywood legends Sid Haig and William Forsythe. The show features original horror rock from the Haunted Creepys. (BB)

SVENGOLIE



(**National Syndicated**)

He's America's favorite horror host. I present **Svengoolie**, host of **Svengoolie**, which can be seen throughout the United States on **METV** Saturday nights at 10 p.m. **Svengoolie** is portrayed by Rich Koz, who began his career as **Son of Svengoolie** in June 1979 with the blessings Jerry G. Bishop, the original **Svengoolie**. The show ran until January 1986. It began airing again in January 1995 on **WCIU-TV Channel 26** in Chicago, IL under the name **Svengoolie** after Jerry G. Bishop advised Koz to drop the "Son of" because he was all grown up now. The show features a great selection of classic horror films including the Universal Horror library. Koz performs comedy skits, commercial parodies, as well as viewer mail where he features letters and artwork from his legion of adoring fans. **Svengoolie** has won seven regional Emmys and has gotten Koz inducted into the Television Academy's Silver Circle. (BB)

ADDITIONAL HOSTS (without full info, to be expanded soon):

BRIGETT BOO-O-O (Missouri)

KPLR Channel 11, Monday Night Fright.

SIMON'S SANCTORUM (Missouri)

KPLR Channel 11's every Saturday night.

CONCLUSION:

This list is current to the information that is available to us at this time. I know there are probably more hosts out there when this list is revised we'll had more information and new hosts. Hopefully, at some point down the road we will be able to make a movie or extended video piece about the Kansas/Missouri host that will include audio and video that we've collected. We hope you've enjoyed strolling through the listing, special thanks go out again to **Bradley Beard** for his wonderful job in compiling the lion's share of the information used in this list. **We'd also like to thank all of the hosts on the list and the horror hosting community for all their work.**





CHAMBERLAIN'S GUIDE TO THE FILMS OF **BORIS KARLOFF** PART THREE

FILMS FEATURED IN THIS EDITION:

- **THE MUMMY [1932], PAGE 29**
- **THE RAVEN [1963], PAGE 31**
- **TARGETS [1968], PAGE 32**
- **THE TERROR [1963], PAGE 34**
- **THE WALKING DEAD [1936], PAGE 35**
- **THE FINAL FILMS OF BORIS KARLOFF, PAGE 37**

THE MUMMY (1932)

By 1931, Boris Karloff had already become famous as Frankenstein's monster (**Frankenstein**), the crazy Morgan in **The Old Dark House**, and Dr. Fu Manchu (**The Mask of Fu Manchu**). So the time was right for him to add a mummy to his repertoire. In fact, his star had risen so much in that one year, he was billed only as "Karloff" in movie posters for **The Mummy**. He would lead the cast in the role of Imhotep, the Egyptian priest who was buried alive for attempting to resurrect his beloved Princess Ankh-es-en amon. Once his mummified remains are discovered and accidentally revived by reading an ancient scroll, the mummy regains human form as Ardath Bey. Bey is in search of his reincarnated princess, who just happens to be in the form of Helen (played by Zita Johann). Bey is eventually thwarted and turned to dust by a ray from the statue of Isis. Amongst the cast is now recognizable Edward Van Sloan as Dr. Muller. Van Sloan is essentially playing a role very similar to that of Van Helsing, whom he played in the previous year's **Dracula**. Johann only appeared in eight movies, the last of which was in 1986, 52 years after her previous film.

Jack Pierce's makeup on Karloff was very extensive and time consuming. Karloff actually only appears as a mummy in the opening sequence but is very convincing. The rest of the film, he is the aged Ardath



Bey and the rest of the film, he is the aged Ardath Bey and the removal of the makeup actually left his face burned, leaving a permanent scar. The flashback sequences were actually filmed to resemble a silent movie, adding an aged look to them. There was also extensive flashback sequences filmed that would have stressed the reincarnated princess through the ages. They were eventually cut and only stills from the sequences remain. This particularly upset Johann, who was a believer in reincarnation

Although there were five films in Universal's mummy series, the last four were actually separate from the original. In 1940, a new series began with **The Mummy's Hand**, which starred Tom Tyler as the mummy Kharis, the character featured in all four remaining films. However, stock footage from **The Mummy** was used in flashback sequences. This mummy is brought to life through tana leaves in search of his beloved Princess Ananka. Lon Chaney Jr. assumed the role for **The Mummy's Tomb** in 1942, **The Mummy's Ghost** and **The Mummy's Curse**, both in 1944. Because of the extensive makeup, Chaney hated the role of Kharis, which admittedly left him very little to do other than shamle around. Finally, Abbott and Costello met the mummy Klaris in a 1955 film that was probably the least enjoyable of the various movies in which they met the monsters. Klaris was played by stuntman Eddie Parker, who had previously doubled for Chaney. His makeup was rather unconvincing and appeared lazily slapped together, somewhat indicative of the Abbott and Costello series by this point.

The new Blu-ray is amazing with a much clearer soundtrack that is without the various hissing and scratches. Perhaps the best way to see how much improved the picture quality is on the Blu-rays are to pay attention to the footage used in the documentaries, which were on the original DVDs. Revisiting the mummy series was a lot of fun. The series did degenerate quickly but with latter films only an hour long, they are fun matinee flicks and recommended, while the 1932 original is essential viewing for any real monster movie fan.



THE RAVEN (1963)

"Afraid my dear? There's nothing to be afraid of."

Dr. Scarabus (Boris Karloff), **The Raven**

As the 1960s arrived, Karloff was finding himself as busy as ever. He hosted 67 episodes of the anthology series **Thriller**, not to mention starring in numerous episodes, as well as appearing in other programs and specials, such as **Arsenic and Old Lace** in 1962. Later than same year, Boris Karloff teamed up with Peter Lorre and Lon Chaney Jr. for a memorable appearance on the **Route 66** television series in the episode "Lizard's Leg and Owlet's Wing." Karloff agreed to wear the monster makeup one more time, the first in more than 20 years. To Karloff, it was a pale shade of what once was but it did prove that Karloff was more popular than ever.

The **Shock Theater package** was now playing on televisions nationwide, giving a whole new generation of fans opportunity to discover his classic films. There was a renaissance of interest in all things Karloff so it was no surprise to find Hollywood knocking on his door once more. Karloff turned down an opportunity to star in William Castle's version of **The Old Dark House** (1932) because it just wasn't the right film for him. But, when American International Pictures offered him a role in **The Raven** (1963), he eagerly accepted the role.



Director and producer Roger Corman (**House of Usher** (1960), **Pit and The Pendulum** (1961)) teamed up with writer Richard Matheson (**Tales of Terror**, the novel **I am Legend**) for a more light hearted loose adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's classic poem. Vincent Price was in his prime and would be reunited with Karloff for the first time since 1939's **Tower of London** (1939). Peter Lorre rounded out the trio of terror with a great supporting cast of Hazel Court (**The Masque of the Red Death** (1964)) and a very young Jack Nicholson (**The Little Shop of Horrors**).

Karloff stars as the aging Dr. Scarabus, who allegedly turns Dr. Adolphus Bedlo (Peter Lorre) into a raven after being challenged to a duel of magic. Bedlo comes tapping at the chamber door of Dr. Erasmus Craven (Vincent Price), who is still mourning the loss of his wife Lenore (Hazel Court) some two years earlier. After turning Bedlo back into a human following a hilarious pursuit of ingredients for a magic potion, Bedlo informs Erasmus that his wife is alive and well at the castle of Scarabus. With their children Estelle Craven (Olive Sturgess) and Rexford Bedlo (Jack Nicholson), they all

head off to the castle for a confrontation with Scarabus. He greets them with open arms and smiles that only Karloff could pull off, leaving one with a chill. Not everything is as it seems as a final battle of magic looms in their future.

The Raven was Karloff's first starring role in nearly five years and the years were not being entirely kind to Karloff. His back was continuing to plague him and walking long distances was becoming more and more difficult. His opening scene walking down the staircase is clearly edited for time. Lorre would improvise lines and while Price went along with chaos, Karloff struggled with the unexpected. His poor health was beginning to hinder long shooting schedules. Nonetheless, any on set difficulties never showed on screen and **The Raven** was a huge box office hit. Needless to say, I highly recommend it as one of my personal favorite Karloff and Price films.

The Raven is played purely for laughs and it is indeed an incredibly fun film. The final battle between Karloff and Price is, well, priceless and Lorre's comedic lines always bring a smile to my face. Check out the trailer on your way to track down this film. It's available either as a triple feature alongside **The Pit and the Pendulum** (1961) and **Tales of Terror** (1962) or as a double feature with **The Comedy of Terrors** (1963).

TARGETS (1968)

In October 2014, I celebrated the 31 Days of Halloween with a month-long tribute to the legendary Boris Karloff. I covered the biggest of his films with a few exceptions, most of which had been reviewed here previously. However, one film that I intentionally left off the list was **Targets** (1968).

This movie has always been an oddity to me for several reasons. Unarguably, it is one of the best films Karloff made and for this to come in the last years of his life, it is an amazing testament to the quality of actor he truly was. And while I do enjoy the movie, I must admit that I've always preferred to see Karloff in more traditional horror film settings. Whether he's a monster, a killer or a mad scientist, that is generally how I prefer to see him.

The biggest reason this movie has always troubled me a little is that it is set in the "modern" world. Unfortunately, the concept of a young man mentally snapping and being ignored by those around him is still far too common in our society today. A sniper killing people is sadly just as relevant today as it was in 1968.

**"REMARKABLE!
TERRIFYING
AND THRILLING!"**

-JUDITH CRIST, New York Magazine

**"I just killed my wife
and my mother.
I know they'll get me.
But before that
many more will die..."**

PARAMOUNT PICTURES PRESENTS
TARGETS



STARRING
BORIS KARLOFF · TIM O'KELLY · NANCY HSUEH
JAMES BROWN · AND SANDY BARON AS KIP LARKIN
Screenplay by PETER BOGDANOVICH · Story by POLLY PLATT and PETER BOGDANOVICH
Directed and Produced by PETER BOGDANOVICH · COLOR · A PARAMOUNT RELEASE



In previous viewings, I've struggled with the enjoyment factor of **Targets**. However, this time my eyes were opened a little due to some research into the making of this film.

Boris Karloff is essentially playing himself in the guise of aging horror film legend Byron Orlok. He's reached a point where he views himself as a dinosaur in a young man's world. He's made one last film, **The Terror** (1963), and now he's ready to retire. However, there is a planned appearance at a local drive-in and, although he initially declines the offer, he agrees to appear at the same drive-in at which Byron Orlock is appearing — more so out of loyalty to his staff.



Meanwhile, we are following the story of Vietnam War veteran Bobby Thompson (Tim O'Kelly). He is gathering guns and weapons while on the verge of a mental collapse. The reasons are never clearly defined but are implied that it could be from the war or maybe from having his pleas for help being ignored. When he does snap, he goes on a killing spree, first on a highway then at the same drive-in Byron Orlok is appearing.

Karloff was supposedly so overjoyed with the quality of the script that he offered to work for free. He owed two days of work to Roger Corman and eventually worked another three days. His role was initially small, only about 20 minutes of screen time in a 90-minute movie. However, it was expanded to about 30 minutes due to Karloff's commitment to the story. Despite this, Karloff's role in the film would be greatly diminished in the trailers.

Young filmmaker Peter Bogdanovich was studying under Roger Corman when he was offered the opportunity to direct **Targets**. In fact, he would later state that he learned more with Corman than in any other time of his career. He had previously directed **Voyage to the Planet of**



Prehistoric Women (1968) under the name of Derek Thomas, so this would essentially be his debut. It was a labor of love as he also produced and edited the film in addition to writing the story with his wife Polly Platt and the script with Samuel Fuller (uncredited).

It was the start of the most prolific period of his career. He followed this with **Directed by John Ford** (1971), **The Last Picture Show** (1971), **What's Up, Doc?** (1972) and **Paper Moon** (1973). According to Hollywood legend, his wife Polly was greatly responsible for his early success, which upon their divorce, was never duplicated. Some of the subtle visuals, such as the cartoonish and claustrophobic feel of Bobby's home, and little in-jokes, such as

Bobby writing out a check to Boris Karloff at the gun shop, are symbolic of Bogdanovich's passion for the film and his cinematic skill at the time. While including scenes from **The Terror** (1963) was Corman's idea, the inclusion of the early Karloff flick **The Criminal Code** (1931) was Bogdanovich's.

There are two key highlights of the film for Karloff fans. The first occurs when Orlok recites the horror story **Appointment in Samarra**. It was done in one take without cue cards. It was placed in the film due in large part to Karloff's recital of **How the Grinch Stole Christmas**. It also harkens back to his work on a 1950s radio program called **The Frightened**. Many of these are now available on archive.org. Another comes in the final moments of the film when Orlok challenges Bobby, ultimately disarming and defeating him with a backhanded smack.

Targets was filmed in late 1967 under the working title of **Before I Die** but not released until August of 1968, after the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy. While American International Pictures expressed interest, Bogdanovich held out for a major studio, which paid off when Paramount purchased the distribution rights. Due to the very low budget, the film turned a profit despite a disappointing box office.

Targets was a product of a turbulent time and Orlok's retirement was very symbolic of the changing tones in horror films. While Orlok did resemble Karloff in many ways, Karloff never desired retirement. He continued to work until months before his death on Feb. 2, 1969. While Karloff was alive to see the film released, he sadly did not get to see the film become widely recognized as a glowing achievement at the end of his illustrious career.

Be sure to check out the trailer on YouTube and then head on over to Amazon as this movie should be in your collection. I've learned to appreciate the film much more upon this viewing. While I still can't rank it in my personal top 10, I can recognize it now as one of Karloff's best.

THE TERROR (1963)

With the filming of **The Raven** (1963) finishing ahead of schedule, director Roger Corman decided he had enough time to do another movie despite being told it wasn't possible. He wanted to take advantage of the wonderful sets as long as they were available and he had a potential cast. From this small recipe for disaster, **The Terror** (1963) was born.

Corman had outlined a very thin sketch of a script and approached some of the cast from **The Raven** to see if they would be interested in taking advantage of the downtime. Vincent Price had to turn down the offer due to a lecture commitment but Boris Karloff agreed as did young actor Jack Nicholson. Karloff signed on for only a small fee with a promise of an additional \$15,000 should the movie be successful, which it ultimately was not. Nicholson was



eager to find work being the young and starving actor that he was at the time. Writer Leo Gordon had a rough script ready for Karloff to read, which Karloff then reportedly worked on to improve it as much as he could. With only days before the sets were to be demolished, the mad dash was on to film as much as they could.

So what is **The Terror** really about? Good question as the script is all over the place and confusing, to say the least. The film is set in 1806, although there are more than a few inaccuracies in that timeline related to history and weaponry mentioned. Jack Nicholson stars as Andre Duvalier, a French soldier who is lost and trying to return to his men. On a beach, he encounters Helene (Sandra Knight), a mysterious woman whom we later learn resembles Ilsa, the late wife of the reclusive Baron von Leppe (Boris Karloff). As it turns out, the ghost of Ilsa is under the control of a witch who has been tormenting the Baron for years. Along the way, we have far too many plot twists to mention. Suffice to say, just about everyone is not who they appear to be and we end up with a climatic flooding of the castle.

While Corman is listed as the director of **The Terror**, it sat on the shelf for months, unfinished due to Corman's schedule and a general lack of funding to wrap the film up. Several young directors ended up working on the film to finish it, including Francis Ford Coppola and even Jack Nicholson himself. However, all the hard work could not save **The Terror** from the very poor and confusing script. It was not a success at all and is generally referred to as one of Karloff's lesser efforts. However, Karloff did eventually get paid his \$15,000 after he agreed to work on **Targets** (1968), which many refer to as one of his best films. **Targets** actually features scenes of **The Terror** incorporated into the final act at the drive-in.

For many years, **The Terror** was only available in standard ratio in poor prints via the public domain. However, in 2011, the film was finally restored from the original 35mm film and presented in HD and 16×9 widescreen on Blu-ray. While it doesn't help it make any more sense, the film is now indeed quite stunning to look at. On that note alone, I recommend you add it to your collection for some late night viewing. Just make sure you are watching the restored version and not the public domain copy, which is still widely available.

THE WALKING DEAD (1936)

"You can't escape what you've done."

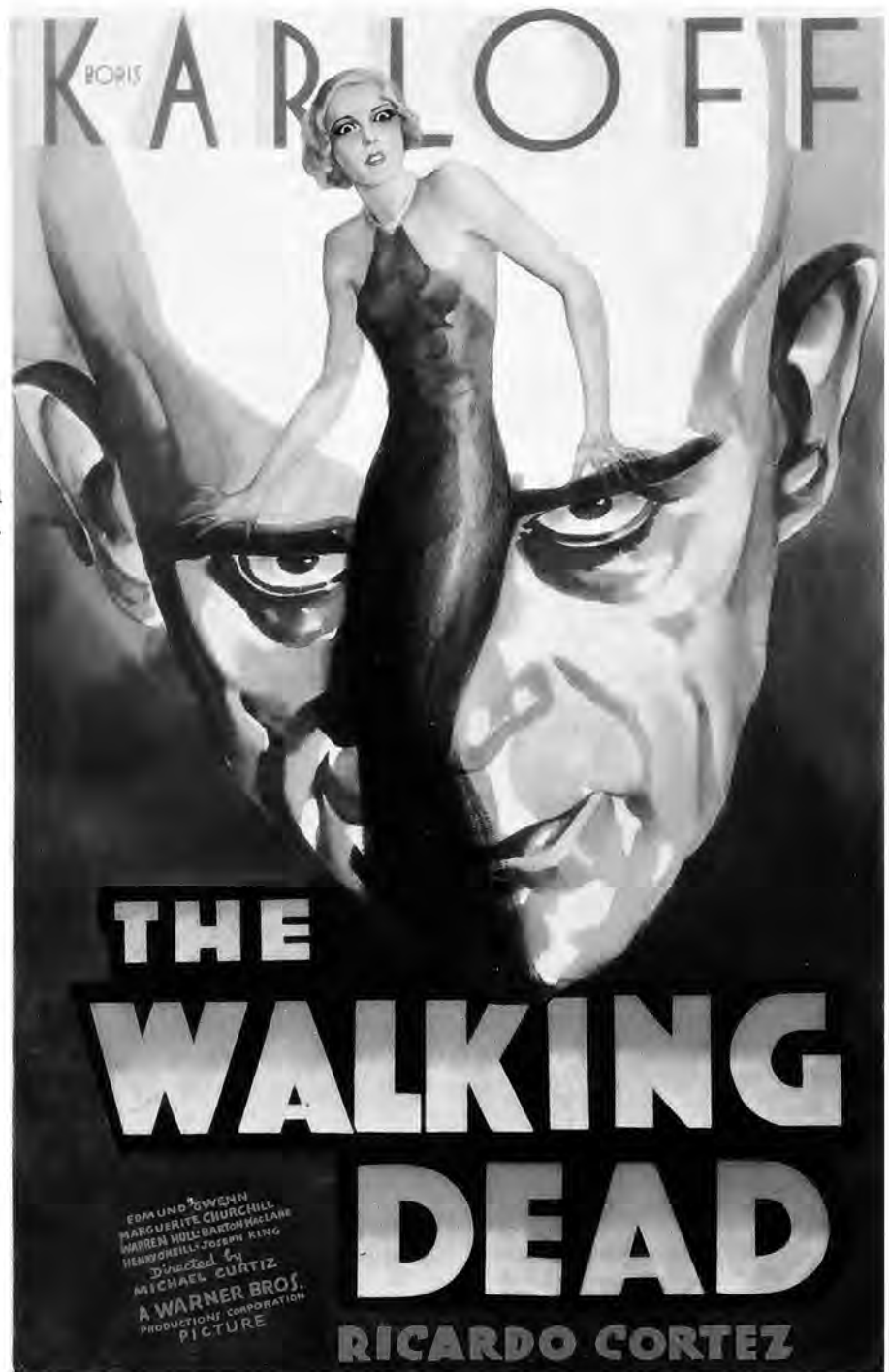
John Elman (Boris Karloff), **The Walking Dead**

By 1936, Karloff had continued to make a name for himself in Hollywood through genre films such as **The Bride of Frankenstein** (1935), **The Black Cat** (1934) and **The Raven** (1963). However, the winds of change were coming as horror films would all but disappear from the cinema until their return in 1939. Boris churned out five films in 1936, most with either mystery or sci-fi elements. Even the one true horror film, **The Walking Dead**, had sub-plots of crime bosses and racketeers. Despite that, it would turn out to be one of Karloff's better efforts during the leaner years of the late '30s.

Karloff plays a musician named John Elman who has just been released from prison. He is looking for a job and makes the mistake of seeking out a crime boss for help. He ends up being a pawn used by them as a scapegoat for the murder of a prominent judge who was causing them trouble. Unfortunately, Elman is at the wrong place at the wrong time and, because the judge was the one who had sentenced him years earlier, he is arrested and,

ultimately, sentenced to death. However, there were two witnesses that could prove his innocence. They come forward but Elman's attorney, part of the criminal gang, is slow to respond, assuring Elman is put to death. This is where we enter Dr. Beaumont (Edmund Gwenn, **Miracle on 34th Street** (1947), **Them** (1954)) who has been studying the idea of bringing animals back to life. He succeeds in bringing Elman back but he is a changed man. His appearance has slightly altered and he now walks with a limp as well as losing some use of his left arm. One he sees his crooked attorney, he begins to hunt down those responsible for his death, one by one.

Karloff's portrayal of Elman is clearly reminiscent of the slow moving zombies so prevalent in media today (including a little TV show bearing the same name of this movie). His appearance is not zombielike but more ghoulish and effective. He is a shell of a man with no memory but his strong connection to music is what shows Dr. Beaumont and others that there is still some of the real Elman left inside. The rest of the cast is strong but I must admit it is a bit jarring to see Edmund Gwenn. His voice always brings me back to that of his role as Kris Kringle from **Miracle on 34th Street**.



The use of camera angles and shadows elevates this film from a standard B flick to something much better. This is not your standard mad doctor flick. The script is smartly written in regards to Elman being a sympathetic character despite his horrific appearance. His killing spree is really that of retribution and often times, the deaths are not directly caused by him but those he is seeking vengeance against. The weakest part of the film centers on the poorly developed characters of Jimmy and Nancy. The final act also requires a leap of faith as Elman seems to magically appear wherever the gangsters are. If you can move past these weaknesses, you'll greatly enjoy **The Walking Dead**. I've enjoyed this one since discovering on TNT in the early '90s.

I highly recommend **The Walking Dead**, which is available on DVD along with four other

Karloff and Lugosi films in the **Karloff & Lugosi Horror Classics** set. I also strongly recommend you read the chapter dedicated to this film in Bryan Senn's great book, **Golden Horrors: An Illustrated Critical Filmography of Terror Cinema, 1931-1939**. It is out-of-print but well worth tracking it down.

THE FINAL FILMS OF BORIS KARLOFF

In 1968 after having recovered from pneumonia that he contracted while filming **Curse of the Crimson Altar**, Boris Karloff shockingly signed yet another film contract. Filmica Azteca was a subsidiary of Columbia Pictures in Mexico. While Boris' daughter Sara Jane wanted him to stop acting because she knew the toll it was taking on him, Boris' wife Evie reportedly continued to encourage him to act. It was quickly determined that Boris would not be able to make the trip to film his scenes in Mexico. So, producer Luis Vergara agreed to pay Boris \$100,000 per film in addition to arranging that he could film all of his scenes in Los Angeles. Thus began the final four films of Boris Karloff's career.

It is no understatement to say that these final four films are bad. In fact, it is highly likely they wouldn't even be remembered today were it not for Karloff's appearances in them. He was in incredible pain by this point of his life. He was on oxygen and wheelchair bound on set waiting for his cue. When the cue came, off came the oxygen and off to the set he went. All four films allowed him to be seated with minimal action, delivering the lines of his various characters. Yet, here is where Karloff always excelled. He would do whatever he could to incorporate a different accent or a special characteristic to enhance the role. Luis Vergara would serve as the producer of all four films while American director Jack Hill would direct the scenes with Karloff. Once the scenes were finished in Los Angeles, Karloff would thank all of the crew and Vergara would return to Mexico to finish the films.

Only two of the films would be released prior to Karloff's death. In **The Fear Chamber** (1968), Karloff would star as Dr. Carl Mandel, a scientist who discovers a living rock underneath a volcano. Of course, it feeds on the adrenaline of young women, so naturally young women are fed to the creature to keep it alive. Actress Julissa would appear for the first of three times, here starring as Corinne Mandel. Next to be released was **House of Evil** (1968) which has Karloff starring as Matthias Morteval, a rich old man who



invites his relatives for a will reading only to die, leaving his relatives subject to his killer toys. Julissa is here again, this time as Lucy Durant. This is probably my favorite of the four films, which isn't saying much.

The final two films would not be released until 1971 after Karloff had passed away. Another film, **Blind Man's Bluff**, also known as **Cauldron of Blood**, was released in 1970. This is the film Karloff filmed in early 1967 after having agreed to fill in for his friend Claude Rains, who died in May 1967. While not a good film, it is decidedly better than the other four films from Vergara. Here, Karloff stars as a blind sculptor who is unwittingly using skeletons for his work. It turns out his wife is killing people for him to use and he may very well be the next victim. There are some crazy visuals here including a cauldron of acid that burns the flesh off the victims. There are plenty of pretty girls, which I think may have been a prerequisite for a '60s horror film. Not a great film by any means but it definitely shines above the other four films.

Vergara would unexpectedly die in 1969 of a heart attack. This would delay the release of the other two films. Finally, in 1971, **The Incredible Invasion** would be released and we see Karloff starring as Professor John Mayer, the inventor of a ray gun who accidentally shoots the gun into space. This upsets some aliens passing by Earth and they decide the ray gun must be destroyed. No, seriously, that is the plot. No Julissa this time but she is back for the fourth and final film, **Isle of the Snake People**. This is a pretty standard voodoo flick with Karloff starring as Carl van Molder who is also the voodoo priest Damballah. You have the usual voodoo fare including zombies. Personally, I think that is why this is the weakest of the four films. It really suffered from being out-of-date by the time it was released due to a little film called **Night of the Living Dead** having been released three years earlier.

All of the four Vergara films are readily available on countless DVD sets and a variety of titles. None of the prints are truly better than the other. Honestly, save yourself the effort and watch them online unless you are a purist like me and want them in your collection. **Cauldron of Blood** was just released on Blu-ray and while I am not convinced it needs to be seen in HD you can never truly go wrong with Karloff.

While these would be the final films Karloff worked on, he did manage to work alongside Red Skeleton and Vincent Price for Red's annual Halloween TV show. Karloff and Price played a father and son mad doctor team and it was very well received by all involved. He would appear on **The Jonathan Winters Show** and **The Name of the Game** in late 1968 before returning to England. Once there, he was rushed to the hospital due to his breathing difficulties. There, he was diagnosed with a weakened heart that was amplified by his severe arthritis and emphysema. Amazingly, he continued to record his **Reader's Digest radio show** even while he was hospitalized. He never recovered and would pass away on February 2, 1969.



MY MOTHER TALKED BORIS KARLOFF OUT OF HIS SHOES: THE SHOCKING TRUE STORY!

My mother, Sue, had several encounters with celebrities during her life. She knew Elvis Presley when they were both children. She danced with Dean Martin. She was a hair stylist for a notorious female racketeer at the heat of the Phenix City scandal. And she once convinced Boris Karloff to give her his shoes!

Boris Karloff was the first famous person I was interested in. As a late-era baby boomer, I saw his old films on television at the same time he was making his last television appearances. I have a clear memory of being thrilled when I saw Karloff and Vincent Price on the **Red Skelton show** singing "The Two of Us." By the time the episode was repeated several months later, Karloff was dead.

Readers of this magazine are likely aware that early in 1941 Karloff appeared on stage in what became a hit dark-comedy play, **Arsenic and Old Lace**.

Karloff played Jonathan Brewster, a murderer on the run, who has had plastic surgery to disguise his appearance. But the surgery was botched and Brewster is upset that he now looks like Boris Karloff! The play was a hit, running almost four years before a film version (without Karloff) was made.

Karloff loved the role and not only performed it for radio and later television, but also took it on the road. His character isn't in the first half of the play, meaning Karloff didn't have too strenuous a time playing the role, and he was also in investor giving him some rights in the productions. After WWII was over, and as his schedule permitted, Karloff would waive his fees and appear with local theater groups in productions of the play, letting them capitalize on the box-office appeal of his name. It was his way of partly giving back to the world of theater that had meant so much to him. He kept up this practice until the early 1960s when his declining mobility kept him from being physically able to continue.

Such a production took place in 1957 in Anchorage, Alaska. My mother was volunteering for the Anchorage Community Theatre, selling tickets and such things and that's how she met Boris Karloff. According to her, Karloff was very generous with his time and friendly to all. He attended rehearsals, discussed the play, sat for publicity interviews with local media — the whole bit. The ACT was thrilled with him and very grateful for his hard work, graciousness and kindness. But they wanted a little more.

My mom came to Karloff with an odd request. After the closing performance, the group wanted to have a small auction to raise even more money. Local notables were donating things to be sold. Would Mr. Karloff possibly donate something personal, perhaps an item of clothing?



My Mother Talked Boris Karloff Out of His Shoes: The Shocking True Story!

Say, for instance, a pair of his shoes? Karloff demurred, he'd be glad to donate something, but wouldn't a necktie or a pocket-handkerchief be better than a pair of old shoes? How about his belt?

Those would be great, my mother told him, but they knew the town, and they knew that his shoes would bring in some large bids from the locals. Karloff finally relented and donated his shoes to the auction.

Only, as my mom told the story, there was no auction. The group wanted to do something special for Karloff and make it a surprise for him. Once they got his shoes, they had them bronzed and mounted on a plaque with an inscription to the effect that "These are the shoes of Boris Karloff. No actor will ever be able to fill them. With Respect and Admiration From the Anchorage Community Theatre." My mother told me that Karloff seemed genuinely moved by the act.

Later that year, Karloff was surprised by being the focus of an episode of **This Is Your Life**, a series where notables were ambushed on live TV and their careers reviewed by host Ralph Edwards and people from their past. Frank Brink, director of the ACT at the time, appears and gives Karloff a ceremonial trowel in honor of Karloff having given his fees and profits from his appearance to their building fund.

Forty-one years later I was living in Philadelphia and a special screening of **The Bride of Frankenstein** (1935) was to be held near the University of Pennsylvania. Part of the reason it would be a special was because Sara Karloff, Boris' daughter, would be there to speak about her father and answer questions.

The screening was introduced by film scholar and horror-film aficionado David J. Skal and went over very well. Ms. Karloff spoke after the film. Later still, she signed photos at a table with Skal who was signing copies of some of his books. Once the crowd thinned out I went up to her and gave her some copies of an encyclopedia entry on her father I had written that had recently been published. She quickly read it and kindly remarked that she liked my comment pointing out how versatile he was by mentioning how his portrayal of Frankenstein's creature in 1931 was done with no words, but his later career success with Dr. Seuss' **How The Grinch Stole Christmas!** was all verbal.

I started to tell her the story my mother told me about his shoes and the ACT. I said, "Back in the late 1950s, my mother was in Anchorage. Alaska and---" She cut me off by saying "The place where they bronzed his shoes? He was very touched by that."

I was stunned. I never thought my mom had made it up, but Sara Karloff's quick reply and confirmation of the story before I had really started to tell it was quite a surprise. It was too late that night but the next day I phoned my mom and told her. It was her turn to be pleasantly surprised.

BSOH MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTORS

Bradley Beard

(Contributing artist)

Is a graphic designer, illustrator, and fine artist.

He has been creating art for over 30 years dabbling in Fine Art, Pop Art, even creating a monstrous children's book. He has a degree in graphic design from the College of Southern Nevada.



Richard Chamberlain

(Contributing writer)

A regular routine for Richard growing up was watching the Saturday night Creature Feature with Crematia Mortem on channel 41 KSHB out of Kansas City. He launched his blog, monstermoviekid.wordpress.com, in 2012, and joined the Dread Media podcast in 2015 as a weekly contributor. He's also made appearances on the B Movie Cast and Monster Kid Radio podcasts.



Ben Urish

(Contributing writer)

Ben has been collaborating with Demolition Kitchen since its early beginnings in 1985.

Appearing under the name Keith Gist, he has been featured on a number of our audio releases. He is currently a professor of American Studies, also having published several books, including one on life of John Lennon.



(Carnival of Souls, continued from page 4)

In an update to this story, the Criterion Collection has asked Demolition Kitchen Video to look for a copy of the director's edit of the film so that they might upgrade their current version from their previous DVD set. DK Video has been contacting local sources to try and come up with a

World PREMIERE WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 7:30 p.m.

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movie
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born
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by
**HERK
HARVEY**

ACTUALLY FILMED IN LAWRENCE!

In the scene above, filmed on the Kaw River, many Lawrence residents will recognize Ed Down of Audio House, Candace Hilligoss, Professional actress, and Wayne Schmilke of the sheriff's office. "Carnival of Souls" is the first feature length motion picture to be produced by a group of progressive citizens, headed by Mr. Herk Harvey of Centron Corporation. Many civic leaders have already recognized the great potential of this new industry to you and your community! Also, motion picture executives who have seen the film have been most impressed with the new talent found in Lawrence. There will no doubt be many more fresh new movies from this group.

"CARNIVAL OF SOULS" World Premiere!

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 26 GRANADA THEATRE

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35mm print. At the time of this writing, it looks like Herk Harvey donated his 35mm print to The University of Kansas Film School, hopefully, we'll be able to work something out so that print may be used.

This is just one of the many odd adventures that BSOH has taken over the years; you never know what may come up next or where this film journey will take us. We hope you continue to follow along with us, thank you for reading our magazine. We'd also like to thank Lance Hayes again for all of his help with this issues and for being so gracious with his time, knowledge, sharing the photos from his vast collection and his wonderful stories about the life of a Kansas film maker.

The Freestate Comicon 2015 10th Anniversary Artwork Portfolio

This year for the **Freestate Comicon** Craig Klotz (the event producer) commissioned a special comic book formatted artwork portfolio for the show with, except for the logo, blank covers. This allowed for patrons of the convention to commission custom artwork from any one of the guest artists in attendance at the show. Here are a few examples of the covers that the artists created for show attendees.

Right - Historic figure and mascot of the show, John Brown as a hipster living in the current world of Lawrence by **Nick Perry**.

Bottom left - **Greg Smallwood** drew his own character **Dream Thief** being harassed by John Brown.

Bottom right - **Kyle Strahm** drew John Brown being engulfed by his **Spread** goo.

LAWRENCE, KS THE FREE STATE COMICON 2015



THE 2015 FREESTATE COMICON
10TH ANNIVERSARY ARTWORK PORTFOLIO

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